

EXHIBIT C

September 13, 2025

Honorable Jeffrey S. White
United States District Court
Northern District of California
Oakland Division
1301 Clay Street
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Judge White,

My name is Casey Goonan. I was born and raised in Concord and Pleasant Hill. I grew up as an athlete, playing football and baseball. I was a pitcher for the baseball team at Diablo Valley College for three years, until my career ended due to a shoulder injury. When I was 21, after accepting that my baseball playing days were over, I transferred from Diablo Valley College to UC Riverside where I earned my BA in Ethnic Studies. During my time as a student, I was introduced to the cause of Palestinian liberation and I became deeply engaged in questions of racial justice, socioeconomic equality, and human rights. Over the years, I came to believe that as a U.S. citizen, I shared a responsibility for the ways in which the government's policies and resources contribute to warfare and oppression abroad, especially the situation facing Palestinians. That belief shaped my work as both an educator and organizer. I continued my studies and earned a PhD in African American Studies from Northwestern University.

In 2016, I was diagnosed with type 1 diabetes and began to struggle with depression and anxiety during my graduate studies. Today, I now know I live with bipolar spectrum disorder and obsessive-compulsive disorder, which intensifies when my diabetes is uncontrolled. When untreated, these conditions distort my judgment and impair my ability to weigh risks and consequences. Beginning in approximately 2020, around the time of the pandemic, my fragile stability began to unravel. By the fall of 2023, I had lost my job, my housing, and my connection to community support. I was alternating between staying with my parents, couch surfing with friends, and sleeping in my car or public spaces. I was arrested for the first time after destroying a hotel sign during a protest.

In late 2023, the worsening genocide in Gaza left me overwhelmed with grief and frustration. I felt a profound sense of complicity, believing that the U.S. government's policies and significant funding of the Israeli military allowed such suffering to continue. My sense of urgency was compounded by my declining mental health. I joined the UC Berkeley solidarity encampment in the spring of 2024, where I initially contributed by helping distribute educational materials and supporting others in the space. But, as my mental health further declined, I stopped managing my diabetes, slept little, and entered what I now recognize as a manic episode. Shortly afterward, I was hospitalized for psychiatric care.

I left the psychiatric hospital against medical advice, and continued to struggle. A trip to Chicago, long planned in advance, only intensified my crisis. I struggled to find places to stay, even ending up sleeping on the street for a night, and felt abandoned by my community. I returned to California feeling more isolated than ever, disconnected from family, friends, and the broader community. It was within this state —consumed by despair over Gaza, the dismantling of the encampments, overwhelmed by my own instability, and estranged from those who sustained me —that I made the reckless and harmful decisions that brought me before this Court.

Having spent over a year in custody, I've had time to reflect on my actions more clearly. I lost touch with my community and engaged in actions that were dramatically different from any of my political activism of the past. I recognize the potential harm my actions may have caused for the community and for my family and loved ones, as well as the harm my actions could have caused to the workers and students on campus, and workers in the federal building. It was never my intention to harm people.

I believe if I had been properly medicated, exercising self-care with my diabetes, and remained connected to my community during those tumultuous months, I would not have done what I did, in the way that I did it. I would like the opportunity to be returned to my community to demonstrate that I will not repeat the actions that brought me before this court. I am not an arsonist but an activist who in a manic fit of rage and desperation committed arson. I hope to be given the chance to show that I can move forward differently—with care, accountability, and respect for those around me.

Thank you,

Casey Goonan